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ABSTRACT

This study investigated factors that helped students of color enrolled in multicultural educator programs succeed academically, focusing on resiliency factors that supported their academic success (defined as college graduation or current enrollment at the sophomore level or higher). First an initial focus group with several minority students verified whether resilience factors from prior research were sufficient. The resulting 10 resiliency factors included scholarship monies, mentors, teacher salaries, familial support, opportunity to serve as a role model, and friends/peer support. Next, a survey was sent to students in multicultural educator programs throughout one midwestern U.S. state. The survey asked respondents to rank their top 5 out of the 10 resiliency factors and to provide demographic data. Results indicated that students considered monetary support in the form of scholarships and family support the most important resiliency factors. Opportunity to serve as a role model, mentor support, and spirituality were also strong responses. Appendixes contain information about the questionnaire, the actual questionnaire, and respondent information required to receive monetary reimbursement for participation in the study. (Contains 73 references.) (SM)

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Running head: RESILIENCY FACTORS FOR STUDENTS OF COLOR

What Helps Students of Color Succeed?

Resiliency Factors for Students Enrolled in Multicultural Educators Programs[1]

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Abstract

The purpose of this study concerned determining which factors appear to be most important in helping students of color succeed academically. While a plethora of academic research has addressed the plight of students of color in the United States, the majority of the focus has been on ascertaining those factors *preventing* academic success. This study sought, instead, to consider the opposite scenario, that is, which "resiliency" factors appear to be most important in *supporting* the academic success of student of color. Success was defined as college graduation, or current enrollment at sophomore level or higher. The methodology involved an initial focus group, followed by a survey sent to students in multicultural educators programs throughout a Midwest state. The results of the research indicate that monetary support in the form of scholarships and family support were ranked as the most important resiliency factors.

Introduction

This preliminary study sought to open research and dialogue to the following question: Which resiliency factors may be most important in helping students enrolled in multicultural educators programs succeed at remaining in school, or in graduating? Despite increased attention in the past several decades to the plight of students of color attempting to graduate from college, the statistics remain less than salutary. With regard to African Americans, for example, Jones and Jackson (2001) state, "Compared to 1970 (5 percent), three times as many African Americans, age 25 and over, had earned at least a bachelor's degree in 2000. However, this record proportion of 17 percent is still lower than that of comparable whites, 28 percent" (par. 11). And according to Civilrights.org (2003), "Latinos are currently far less likely than African Americans and European Americans to complete high school and college, as only 57% of Latinos 25 and older had graduated from high school by 2000; only 11% had undergraduate degrees" (par. 20). The overall situation regarding American Indians is perhaps the most discouraging, with a high school graduation rate of only 66% (Study Highlights Benefits, 2001; see also Machamer & Gruber, 1998; Shafer & Rangasamy, 1995).

A plethora of academic research has addressed the negative factors leading to such discrepancies between European American students and students of color (Artiles, Trent, Hoffman-Kipp, & Lopez-Torres, 2000; Gordon, 1994; Kobrak, 1992; Mazon & Ross, 1990; Quiocho & Rios, 2000; Sedlacek, 1987). Su (1996), for example, notes, "[M]inority candidates came from lower socioeconomic status, had less positive educational experiences, and encountered more obstacles in making career choices than their White [sic] peers" (p. 117). Similarly, researchers have documented the problems with retention of students of color (Green, 1989; Lang & Ford, 1988; Lang, Ford, & Cole, 1992). "[Fifty-five] percent of black students and

51 percent of Latino students who enter college do not have a college degree twelve years later. The figure for white students is 33 percent" (Goodlad, 1990, p. 22).

While the obstacles to success have been well documented, little has been written about factors that *help* such students succeed. Yet surely this opposite side of the coin is equally important to examine, that is, the *positive* contributing factors for those students of ethnic heritages other than European American who succeed in graduating from college, despite the odds (see, e.g. Allen, 1981; Gordon, 1994; Martinez & O'Donnell, 1993). "Resiliency factors," a term created for the studying of positive factors, has been defined as "positive adaptation despite negative environmental circumstances" (Miller, 1999, p. 494). Within this area, there is a dearth of evidence found regarding multicultural college student populations: "[Research on resiliency] fails to include minority youths or does not take into consideration their distinctive racial and environmental circumstances" (Miller, 1999, p. 493).

Information about resiliency factors is crucial, to better understand the needs of students with cultural backgrounds other than European American, particularly those students who grow up in poverty, without access to the greater privilege of the middle and upper classes. Unfortunately, the overlap between students of color and poor students is substantial; most students of color experience greater levels of poverty (see, e.g., Gordon, 1994, 2000; Spaights, Kenner, & Dixon, 1986; Sadovnik & Semel, 2001; Su, 1996). For the purposes of this research, however, students of color were the population of interest, rather than students of lower socioeconomic status.

Students of color enrolled in teacher education programs are a particularly important population to consider. There is an ever-increasing need in U.S. schools for teachers of ethnic backgrounds other than European American:

> [W]hile the nation's school-age population is becoming increasingly diverse, the teaching force remains predominantly White [sic], middle class, and female. In 1996, 90.7% of the nation's teachers were White... However, students of color comprise nearly 30% of the school-age population nationally, with about 14% speaking a language other than English at home. (Bennett, 2002, p. 21)

Thus, the decline of students of color enrolling in, much less graduating from, such programs is particularly distressing (Artiles et al., 2000; Kobrak, 1992; Mazon & Ross, 1990; Quiocho & Rios, 2000). Unfortunately, despite the importance of addressing this topic, "[l]ittle information is available about students from diverse backgrounds as they go through teacher education programs to become teachers" (Su, 1996, p. 118). Of the research that has been conducted on students of color in teacher education programs, most studies have concentrated on negative factors, such as lack of information about teacher education programs, lack of recruiting efforts, lack of financial assistance, and lack of appropriate career counseling (Goodlad, 1990; Goodlad, Soder, & Sirotnik, 1990; Gordon, 1994; Hood & Parker, 1994; Loo & Rolison, 1986; Su, 1996). Goodlad's (1990) research in this area concludes:

> Our data confirm the stereotype of teaching as an occupation that attracts women and white candidates—80 to 92 percent, respectively. ... Almost uniformly, the percentage of minority students in the teacher education programs we studied was significantly below the percentage enrolled in each institution as a whole, and nowhere did we pick up any encouraging data regarding recruitment efforts likely to change this situation in the near future. (p. 199)

Although there is little research demonstrating that an increase in teachers of color is sufficient in and of itself to enhance the academic achievement of students of color, there is

evidence that a larger pool of teachers of color could make a difference in the futures of many minority children (King, 1993; Foster, 1994, 1997). The desire for an increase in minority participation in the teaching profession, however, is not based solely on the need for teachers of color to teach minority children; the demand for teachers of color in school systems with a large majority of European American students is also gaining momentum (Grant, 1987, 1990; Grant & Sleeter, 1986; Gifford, 1986). Many parents of today's generation of school children have begun to realize that European American children in homogeneous schools face deficiencies in their education that could handicap their effective functioning in a multicultural world (Grant & Secada, 1989).

By better understanding the resiliency factors of academically successful students of color, it is thus proposed that researchers and educators as well as college recruiters and administrators may be able to incorporate more culturally appropriate support mechanisms, and create atmospheres more conducive to college retention for students of color.

Methodology

This research project involved both a qualitative methodology and a quantitative methodology. In this manner, the strengths of each methodology were believed to contribute to a more complete overall picture (Gersten, Baker, & Marks, 1998; Knight & Kuleck, 1999; Worthen, Sanders, & Fitzpatrick, 1997). First, an initial focus group was held to verify whether the resiliency factors found through prior research were considered sufficient. Second, a survey was sent to students in multicultural educators programs throughout a Midwestern state. This state's multicultural educators programs provided a unique opportunity to reach an important base of the study population: students of multicultural backgrounds preparing to become teachers. The programs resulted from a state-funded effort to recruit and prepare future teachers

of color who would agree to work for two years in the state's school system upon completion of the program. Goals of the state's multicultural educators programs were primarily: 1) To address the needs for children to be taught by teachers of color in the state; 2) To increase the number of well-qualified licensed teachers of color who are available to teach in schools in this state; and 3) To provide access, financial support, and academic support to well-qualified multicultural educators.

Focus Group

Four students enrolled in a multicultural educators program at a Midwestern state college participated in the focus group: an African American female; a Latina foreign-born female; a Latino American male; and an Asian foreign-born male. To encourage attendance at the focus group, each participant received a payment fee of $30. The students were presented with a list of possible resiliency factors for students of color gleaned from prior research. These resiliency factors were then discussed, in addition to other factors brought up by the participants. The final list of resiliency factors resulting from the focus group are listed below.

1. Scholarship Monies: Financial assistance enabling enrollment and retention in college.
2. Mentors: Advising and mentoring support provided by college faculty, other teachers, or other adults in the community.
3. Teacher Salary: Stable salary with attractive health benefits and a substantial summer vacation.
4. Opportunity to Be a Role Model: Through a future teaching career, being able to serve as a "cultural" role model for students of all ethnicities.

5. Familial Support: Emotional support provided through one's family of origin, or one's life partner and/or children.
6. Teacher Hours: Opportunity to have quality time with one's family due to a teaching career's hours.
7. Friend/Peer Support: Emotional support from friends or college peers.
8. Social/Community Support: Emotional or social support from the larger community, through membership in civic or social groups.
9. High School Preparatory Support: Vocational guidance or high school preparatory courses that inspired and sustained one's goals toward a teaching career.
10. Spiritual Support: Reliance upon one's spiritual beliefs to sustain and encourage college success.

Survey

After compiling the list of resiliency factors, a survey was created. The survey asked respondents to rank their top five resiliency factors from the list of ten factors. In addition, four open choices were included—blank spaces in which respondents could record additional factors. The survey also included demographic questions, including age, ethnicity, country of citizenship, and year in school or year of graduation. All respondents were offered a $10 payment fee as incentive for returning the survey within a certain period of time. To protect the anonymity of the respondents, information necessary for payment was filed separately from the returned surveys, and cross-referenced with the use of code numbers located at the top of both documents.

Respondent Sample

The sample of survey respondents was derived from address lists of students who had graduated from, or were enrolled in, multicultural educators programs in colleges within one Midwestern state. The majority of the surveys were initially sent to an administrator at each program site, who addressed and sent out the survey packets to their current students and graduates, to protect the students' anonymity. The survey packet contained the following enclosures: a brief description of the project (Appendix A); the survey ("Resiliency Factors Questionnaire," Appendix B); and a form to fill out and return for monetary payment (Appendix C).

Results

A total of 247 surveys were sent out; 32 were returned from the post office with incorrect addresses. Of the total surveys, 205 were delivered via administrators at individual program sites, and of these, 32 surveys were not utilized. The total number of viable surveys was 183. A total of 78 surveys were returned after two mailings and in some cases, telephone calls, giving an overall response rate of 43%. Two of the returned surveys, however, were duplicates; a third individual chose not to fill in the survey and expressed a negative opinion about research concerning students of multicultural backgrounds. In addition, due to incorrect ranking of the resiliency factors, 27 surveys could not be tallied initially. Of this grouping, a second survey with additional instructions was sent out; 20 respondents completed the survey correctly a second time and 7 did not return the second survey. The final number of viable surveys was 68, for a response rate of 37%, which is considered acceptable in terms of validity of the results (Scriven, 1984).

Participants who returned viable surveys ranged in age from 18 to 52 (mean = 30.65, SD = 9.69). Three participants did not provide their ages. The participants were ethnically diverse, representing seven different ethnic groups, as shown in Table 1.

--- Insert Table 1 about here ---

Twenty-eight of the participants reported being undergraduates with the remaining 40 not reporting their year in school (see Table 2). The participants held a variety of degrees from bachelor degrees to certificates to graduate degrees as shown in Table 3. Almost half of the participants graduated within the prior four years (see Table 4).

--- Insert Table 2 about here ---

--- Insert Table 3 about here ---

--- Insert Table 4 about here ---

Participants were allowed the option of adding and ranking their own resiliency factors. Those additional factors were analyzed and a total of six factors were added: Institutional Support, Course Availability, Academic Preparation, Internal Motivation, Employer Support, and Transportation.

To test whether all 68 subjects selected similar rankings, Kendall's Coefficient of Concordance[i] was calculated, using the nonparametric Rank F Test. Multiple pairwise comparisons (family level of significance of .20) were then conducted, and differences in the rankings ($F(.95,15,1005) = 48.67$, $p<.001$) were found. To validly compare ranks, the difference between the ranks must be greater than a correction factor[ii]. Using this criterion, the first factor, scholarships and financial support, and the fifth factor, family support, had the highest overall ranks (see Table 5).

--- Insert Table 5 about here ---

The sample was divided into five ethnic groups: African-Americans, Asian-Americans, Latino/Latina Americans, Native Americans, and Multiracial Americans. Other ethnic groups had insufficient participants to differentiate between the resiliency factors. The rankings by ethnic groups are shown in Figure 1 and Table 6, which indicate more similarity within each ethnic group as measured by the mean rank correlation. The correlation of all rankings was .38, while for Native Americans it was .60.

--- Insert Table 6 about here ---

--- Insert Figure 1 about here ---

Limitations to Research

There were a number of limitations to the research project. First, limited financial assistance precluded reaching a larger sample of the desired population. Therefore, the results should be taken as very preliminary; it is the authors' hope that such research will encourage interest in a national study with a similar theme and methodology. Second, the high number of returned surveys filled out incorrectly (27) indicates a lack of clarity in the questionnaire directions. A third important limitation involves the "lumping together" of all unique ethnic groupings into one group called "students of color." The limited return sample precluded differential analyses based on ethnicity, due to validity concerns. However, clearly, separate cultural groups may well produce very different rankings of resiliency factors. Miller (1999) comments, "[F]actors unique to non-majority populations must be considered when assessing [resiliency]" (p. 493).

A fourth limitation involves the lack of a control group of European American students with whom to compare this survey's results. However, the results of similar research with "support factors" from European American students (Su, 1996) are discussed and compared in

the Discussion Section below. A fifth limitation: Due to concerns with protecting anonymity, most of the surveys were not sent out directly to respondents, but were mailed out to students by administrators at various multicultural educators program sites (173). Therefore, the researchers had limited control over the rigor of procedures used. While the program administrators were trusted implicitly, it is possible that the research protocol could have been inadvertently compromised. Sixth, the response rate (37%) was low, despite repeated mailing attempts and a $10 incentive for returning the survey. There may be several reasons for this: first, students are a transient population and tend to move often; it is very difficult to maintain current addresses and phone numbers of students after they graduate. This factor may have played a significantly detrimental role in the researchers' ability to reach the optimum number of students. Second, given that the majority of the questionnaires were sent through college administrators, it was not possible to thoroughly follow up lack of response via telephone. Third, research suggests minority populations may be less likely to return mailed surveys (Underwood, Kim, & Matier, 2000).

Discussion

"I'd have never been able to be in a highly competitive program without having access to the scholarship I received in addition to student loans," said one respondent. It is unsurprising that the most popular resiliency factor, both in terms of ranking popularity (ranked number one as well as number three), and number one choice frequency, was scholarship monies. Clearly, if students do not have financial means of attending college, all other considerations will not matter, and students of color may be more likely to have economic challenges. Su (1996) states, "[M]inority [college] candidates come from a decidedly lower socioeconomic status than their White [sic] counterparts, [and] ...[are] in a much more difficult financial situation than the White

students" (p. 121; see also Newman & Newman, 1999; Spaights et al., 1986). Yet, as both focus group participants and survey respondents indicated in this research project, many students of color do not know that scholarship monies may exist. One survey respondent stated, "Regarding scholarships, I needed to be told what was out there. ...I think many people (students) don't realize what type of help is available." This implies the importance of making such information available from sources such as high school career guidance counselors, and via advertising the scholarships in media likely to be seen by students of color.

Family support was the factor ranked second most often. Three-fourths of the focus group members considered this a very important means of support as well. One survey respondent commented on the value of spousal support: "My husband's support: giving me rides, ...showing me around the [university, and] helping me with how the system works." Past research regarding family support, interestingly, found very different results. Su (1996) states, "Most of the minority candidates interviewed in this study met with strong resistance and even outright protest from their families, relatives, and friends, who were 'surprised,' 'disappointed,' and 'sad' about their decisions to enter teaching because of their expectations for the children to enter more lucrative and prestigious fields" (p. 126). Additional research needs to be conducted to clarify this discrepancy in results.

The factor that provoked the most written response, as well as a strong response in the focus group session, was most frequently ranked fourth in terms of ranking popularity: Opportunity to Serve as a Role Model. One respondent, for example, noted:

> Many of us left industries and higher institutions because of lack of advancement [that] was mostly racially motivated. Being in the _____ program and

> teaching in the inner city schools gave us the opportunity to instill confidence, and self-esteem, and to act as positive role models for students of color.

This sentiment is very similar to findings by Goodlad et al. (1990), who states,

> The strong drive to become teachers was particularly obvious in nontraditional students leaving other lines of work. They and their younger counterparts were well aware of the low status of teaching in the surrounding society before entering their programs, and they soon became aware of the low status of teacher education in their institution. ...In shrugging off derision, many appeared to gain added conviction from the implicit virtues inherent in choosing an occupation devoid of power and status. (pp. 212-213)

Serving as a role model was clearly an important intrinsic motivator to become a teacher. Another survey respondent stated, "After being a teacher's aide for 2000-2001 and seeing the changing face of public schools with 73% of the student body being of a minority background, I feel it is important for the students to see one of their own in a positive light. Also...more male teachers [are] desperately needed."

Past research also supports this finding (Becket, 1998; Briar, 1991; Darder, 1995; Ford, Grantham, & Harris, 1997; Fosert, 1994; Galindo, 1996; Irvine, 1989; Klassen & Carr, 1997; Quiocho & Rios, 2000). Su (1996) states, "Most importantly, minority teachers serve as role models for minority students and help them experience the reality that minority people are and can be successful" (p. 118). Focus group members, however, were quick to point out that they considered themselves role models for all students, not just students of color, particularly given that some of them were teaching in classrooms with all European American students. This sentiment was reflected by numerous comments, such as:

> The main reason I want to be a teacher is because of the children. As a person who dealt with racial issues throughout my school years, I want other children both of color and white to see me as an example. I want children to know that sometimes people are cruel, but you cannot let their thoughts or words form you in life. I want to be that example.

In a similar study done by Su (1996) that asked European American students and students of other ethnic affiliations to rate their "support reasons" for entering the teaching profession, the groups rated many of the factors similarly: "to have a personally satisfying job"; "to make a contribution to society"; "to help children and/or young adults--to be of service to others"; "I like children and/or youth"; "To work in a noble, moral, and ethical profession" (p. 125). Notably, however, "None of the White [sic] candidates expressed concerns for the conditions of education for the poor and minority children and what they could do for them as teachers" (p. 125); the minority candidates, on the other hand, "demonstrated a strong awareness of the unequal educational opportunities for the poor and minority children" (p. 125).

Finally, with regard to role models, one respondent commented in particular on the detrimental effect of being bullied as a student of color:

> One of the main reasons I wanted to become a teacher was because I was bullied throughout middle school and high school. The other students made fun of me because I was a small, unathletic [sic] Asian ...[who] got good grades. I don't want other students to experience what I went through. Teachers must learn how to deal with bullying because it happens all the time in the classroom. They need to be properly trained to prevent it from happening.

Given the increasing interest in bullying as a potential source of school violence (Natvig, Albrektsen, & Qvarnstrom, 2001; Salmivalli & Nieminen, 2002), this response is worth noting. Peer pressure to conform, particularly among minority youth, to a "tough guy" image is indeed related to the stereotypes and negative role models put forth by the mass media, and the movie industry. For example, African American men stereotypes include the professional athlete, the "gang rap" artist, or the drug dealer; the prototype of 'intellectual hero' is non-existent.

Mentor support was the fifth most commonly ranked factor in terms of ranking popularity. Research supports the need for more and better mentoring of students of color (Su, 1996; Gordon, 1994). The Ohio State University Young Scholars Program, for example, provides mentoring for African American and other underrepresented minority youth who aspire to attend college, and has been extraordinarily successful at increasing college retention (Newman & Newman, 1999). The program emphasizes integrating the youth into the college environment, from grade six onward, to instill a sense of belonging, and also provides financial aid, mentors, counselors, and peer support. Clearly, school personnel as well as adults in the community can play a pivotal role in strengthening the resiliency of students of color.

When comparing results between ranking popularity and number one choice frequency, there is one obvious difference; spirituality is the third most important factor in the latter rankings. This suggests that spirituality may well be an important means of support for students of color. Many comments in the respondents' surveys were devoted to the necessity of prayer and belief in a higher spiritual power, as a primary contributing factor to academic success. One respondent commented, for instance, "If the Lord wants me to teach, He'll help get me through with that degree." In Su's (1996) research, spirituality is not broached as a factor for European American, or ethnic minority, students. In a second study involving variables related to minority

students' academic success, spirituality is not identified in a list of eight factors (Sedlacek, 1987), yet in other studies assessing resiliency for at-risk minority communities, spirituality is a central factor (Gary, Beatty, Berry, & Price, 1983; Mental Health: A Report of the Surgeon General, 2002; Werner, 1989). Indeed, spirituality appears to play a significantly more important role, in general, for many ethnic minority communities including African Americans and Latino/a Americans (Holt, Houg, & Romano, 1999; Werner, 1989). With regard to African Americans in particular, Landau-Stanton, Clements, Tartaglia, Nudd, & Espaillat-Pina (1993) state:

> Appreciating the role of religion in the life of African-Americans [sic] begins with the recognition that the church has been historically the only institution 'owned' by the African-American community. ...The church has been a key component of this group's extended family concept. (p. 281)

Survey respondents in the general comments section raised additional important issues. Such issues may be of interest to future researchers, and may also be important for school administrators to consider. One issue involved the need for continued support and encouragement once the graduate obtains a job. Consider the following two comments:

> Teachers of color face many different issues in the workplace such as subtle racism, lack of support from administration, etc. I drew this conclusion after speaking to numerous teachers of color. Many feel...the system is set up to fail them and they have to work much harder to prove themselves. This can lead to isolation.

and:

> Once a teacher of color has ...[been] assigned a position, administration in the building needs to encourage his or her staff to welcome the new teacher. Also, some form of mentoring needs to continue once the teacher of color is placed in a school. Lastly, administration cannot afford to give teachers of color the worse combination of students.

These quotes are supported by research, including Ford et al. (1997), who state, "Few school personnel and teachers receive substantive preparation in multicultural education, few teachers are trained to examine their own biases and stereotypes" (p. 216; see also Darling-Hammond, 1994; Ladson-Billings, 1994).

Concerning salary, comments corroborated past research findings (see, e.g., Su, 1996). Comments were generally negative, such as, "The teacher salary is actually the depressing part. I wonder why nobody wants to teach!" In the focus group session, however, two participants discussed the positive aspects: that a teacher's salary includes excellent benefits, and a three-month vacation. Faculty advisors in educator programs can also provide guidance in this area, given that teacher salaries may vary considerably depending upon the subject, the school location, and other factors. Therefore, the student's initial choice of major, upon entering a teacher education program, will be very important. In addition, it may be helpful for aspiring teachers of color to remain as flexible as possible regarding location, given that starting salaries vary considerably.

Pollock (2001) brings up another factor, or cluster of factors meshed into one: community support. In discussing racial achievement, she suggests the need for communal sources to address problems and potential solutions:

> In seeking to locate responsibility solely in others, however, we preclude inclusive discussion of how all players might work together to prevent the patterns we expect. Without such communal discussions of how to undo racial achievement patterns,...we risk allowing such patterns to...remain" (p. 3)

One author (Holt) recently attended a community justice circle with an African American community center; the purpose of such "circles" is to provide a variety of community expertise and support for families in need. The concept of 'restorative justice' originated with incarcerated youth and other types of offenders (see, e.g., Keating, 1982), and has been expanded upon for families who may be at risk for a number of reasons. This would be an interesting area of future research, given that such circles appear to be successful at helping families struggling with a host of concerns, including scholastic achievement.

Similarly, academic institutions of higher learning have begun to understand the need for more encompassing recruitment policies. Some colleges have begun implementing programs with a long-term, all-inclusive approach, in which youth from low-income, urban communities are mentored from an early age. Jones, Yonezawa, Ballesteros, and Mehan (2002), for example, found that "a collaborative [school-university] partnership model can increase college-going outcomes for under-represented students and promote equitable change in school structure and climate" (p. 3; see also Armstrong, James, & Stallings, 1995).

Conclusion

Resiliency factors for students of color thus include scholarship monies and other means of financial support, family support, and other factors such as spirituality. The financial and emotional drain upon college students of color with lower socio-economic status can be

profound, thus it is incumbent upon the university itself to provide an important source of resiliency:

> Ethnic minority students must confront the same developmental challenges that face every student; at the same time, they have the additional challenges of adapting to another culture. These cultural differences may result in difficulty identifying with the university. Past research has shown that the climate of the institution can be critical to student retention. (Zea, Reisen, Beil, & Caplan, 1997, p.150).

It is encouraging to note that most institutions of higher learning have instituted programs to support the admittance and retention of students of color (Quiocho & Rios, 2000). Other means of institutional support are worth examining. With regard to African American students, Spaights et al. (1986) comment that while higher institutions of learning are providing compensatory programs with scholarship monies, tutoring and extended time for completion of degrees, other equally important elements are not being addressed: "What has been overlooked by many universities are the many non-academic issues (i.e. [sic], economic state and human development issues) that black students must encounter" (p. 112).

Given that this preliminary research indicates family support to be of significant importance, universities and colleges may be advised to further develop programs toward meeting this goal. For instance, childcare could be made more readily available, family counseling provided, family activities instituted, and assistance offered to other family members interested in obtaining or completing a college degree. In the classrooms of one of the authors (Holt), the children of her students are always welcome, as long as disruptions are kept at a minimum. This enables the mothers to attend class rather than having to miss, when a babysitter

is sick, or daycare is not available, and the frequent presence of children has never proven to be detrimental to the class. In fact, student evaluations have been very positive in this regard, from both students with children as well as those without children.

Institutional support was not listed as a resiliency factor, but it was included more than once in the written-in factors. In addition, a number of respondents commented on the encouragement they received from their individual multicultural educators programs, such as:

> I think that the support of the Office of [multicultural student support] was a constant, resilient factor throughout my education at [name of college]. There was always an open door, not only to express things that were difficult (e.g. courses, transportation, tuition), but there seemed to be people who truly cared about the program as a whole, and each of us separately. No one was beyond or too high to stop and listen and give constructive advice. I was also blessed with an advisor who, although he was white, seemed to always understand culturally where I was (and where others were) [at], and when he did not [know], knew when to lean back, or ask sensitive questions, to find out. [Name of Program Director] and the [name of program] staff should be applauded for their diligence in continuing the program. Through thick and thin, he and the staff never backed out, stopped answering questions or giving support. I will be forever grateful for the experiences I received through my education at [name of college].

This quote illustrates an additional important point—that the combination of several factors may create the most optimum experiences for students of color, which in the case above included mentoring, institutional support, and cultural sensitivity. Unfortunately, such a program may still be the exception to the rule. Su (1996) comments on the lack of inclusion that students of

multicultural status experience on campus: "[Our] findings support the observation by Gordon (1994) that the university is not a friendly environment for minority students" (p. 123). Regarding African American students, Spaights et al. (1986) state, "[Black] students often enter academic environments that are confusing, difficult, and hostile" (p. 112).

Additionally, the curricula of many academic institutions lack multicultural emphasis; this is a common way in which students of color feel alienated. Ford et al. (1997), state, "[O]nce admitted to teacher education programs, minorities find little emphasis on multicultural education, and they receive little preparation to deal effectively with urban issues and realities[, thus]...minority students' interest and persistence in teaching decrease" (p. 214). Therefore, institutions of higher learning should continue to examine the extent to which the curricula across major areas of study truly reflect diverse cultures and points of view (Gordon, 1994; Su, 1996).

Another factor, teaching as a calling, may have been embedded within two resiliency factors, the desire to be a role model, and spiritual support. Goodlad et al. (1990) states, "Many viewed school-teaching [sic] as exceedingly important and potentially satisfying—as a calling. The dismaying part of our ...[findings concerned] the general failure of the institutions to capture and build on the concept of teaching as a calling" (p. 16). That is, using the idea of teaching as a calling may be a salient means of piquing interest for students of color in recruitment efforts, given the importance many of the research participants placed on intrinsic means of support. Such factors indicate that entering the teaching field as a calling may very well be important to students of color. Goodlad (1990) states, "[I]gnoring the appeal of teaching as a calling is a serious error. ...Almost doggedly, these young people had stuck to their determination to teach while admitting to little recognition and financial reward" (pp. 15-16).

There appears to be a need for more complete career counseling of teacher candidates at the outset of a college career and throughout the educational process. Students should be advised to select a major most likely to be in demand in the job market, before they commit time and money to a specific teaching discipline. Choosing between elementary education, secondary education, special education, math, science, or other areas is a very important decision, given discrepancies in salaries and job availability. According to one of the authors (Mahowald), many excellent teacher candidates have left the field due to lack of job opportunity and personal frustration at not securing a position in a particular area of preparation. Spirituality is an issue worth examining more closely as well. While separation of church and state precludes direct involvement by public academic institutions, providing information about churches and spiritual support groups in the area, for instance, could provide indirect support. Certainly additional research in this area is warranted. Finally, as stated previously, this research should be seen as preliminary. It is the authors' hope that a future research project in a similar vein, but with a national scope, will be attempted.

In closing, perhaps the most poignant comment by a respondent discussed a number of salient issues, including the nearly heroic effort this respondent went through to finish college, the stereotypes which arose due to race, as well as the subsequent role the respondent was placed into as the 'token' person of color at the job site. In spite of this, the respondent persevered. This personal narrative thus provides an appropriate conclusion to the article:

> I am one of seven children. None of my sisters or brothers graduated from college. None of us could afford college. As a result, none of our children are encouraged to embrace college. I began college in 1978 for two years but had to stop in 1980 to work. (No, I did not have children.) My family's priorities were on

surviving, not education. I have been married for 20 years. I have 2 daughters and one foster daughter. We have struggled all of my life and theirs (financially). I was an Educational Assistant for 9 yrs. I would be asked to mentor, advise, counsel, mother, etc. African American children. I would teach/train other staff how to relate to Black [sic] children and children of color. Needless to say I was not getting paid for my services. I am not angry with the system nor [sic] society. These are just facts. In conclusion, I will say that I have been poor all of my life. What encouraged me to continue on this educational journey was my daughters. A change has to begin someplace! "Each one reach one, each one teach one!"

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Appendix A

INFORMATION ABOUT THE
RESILIENCY FACTORS QUESTIONNAIRE
(Please keep this sheet for your own personal records.)

The attached questionnaire, "Understanding Resiliency Factors for Students of Color in Teacher Education Programs," has been created by Dr. Jennifer Holt, a professor and researcher with the _____ University Office of Cultural Diversity, to help researchers, college recruiters/administrators/ professors and other interested parties understand more clearly "success" or resiliency factors for students of color, specifically students of color within teacher education programs. "Success," in this sense, is being defined as having attained at least junior status in college, or having already graduated with a B.A. (or an M.A.) and having begun a career as a teacher.

It is vitally important for colleges and educators to understand what factors help students of color succeed in college, for the following reason: while about 75% of all Euro-American students who enter college attain graduation status, only about 25% of all students of other ethnic backgrounds attain graduation status. Many research projects have documented those factors contributing to the obstacles for students of color, but much less research has been conducted on what factors have *helped* those students who *have* succeeded. The latter are known as "resiliency factors," given that these factors provide students with support and staying power, or *resiliency*, in the face of collegiate challenges. We believe such resiliency factors are important tools for colleges to consider using when recruiting students of color, as well as in creating the most conducive atmosphere possible for such students' collegiate success. **We are asking you, one such student, to help us in understanding what resiliency factors have been important for *your own personal success at staying in school*.**

Please take a moment to fill out the attached questionnaire. It is extremely important that every respondent who is sent this form return it, because the available population, or pool of respondents, is not very large, and the research will not be considered valid without an adequate response. **As an incentive, $10 is being offered to each respondent who returns the questionnaire.** In order to receive the $10, you must fill out the attached document, "Respondent Information for Monetary Reimbursement, Resiliency Factors Questionnaire" **(to receive reimbursement, the questionnaire must be received by June 1, 2001)** with your name, the address to which the check should be sent, and social security number. A check will be mailed to you within two months. Your involvement in this research is completely voluntary; choosing not to complete the questionnaire will not result in any negative consequences.

Confidentiality and Risks. All returned questionnaires will be treated with utmost confidentiality. No responses to the questions will be associated with any particular respondent. The documentation you filled out for receiving the $10 monetary reimbursement, which identifies you as a respondent by name, will be stored separately from the completed questionnaires, both in secure files. The two files will only be cross-referenced by the file number at the top of each questionnaire and monetary reimbursement form. Only the researcher, Dr. Jennifer Holt, and the staff of the Multicultural Educator's Program at _____ University will have access to such records. The results of this research will be published, but all findings will be reported anonymously and no identifying information will be used that could reveal a respondent's identity. Risks to filling out this questionnaire are minimal, given that it is anonymous, but it is possible that identifying information could reveal a respondent's identity unintentionally in a published report. Any questions or concerns about this research, as well as a summary of published results, may be directed to Dr. Jennifer Holt, through the Office of Cultural Diversity, _____ University, (320) 255-2388, or by emailing bmahowald@stcloudstate.edu. Les Green, Director, Office of Cultural Diversity, and Betsy Mahowald, Assistant Director, are also available to answer questions at the same phone number. If you would prefer to talk to someone other than the

researcher or her associates, you may contact _____ University's Office of Sponsored Programs, the funders for this research, at (320) 255-4932.

We appreciate your help very much and best of luck in all of your collegiate and career endeavors! Please keep this sheet for your own records.

Appendix B

QUESTIONNAIRE: UNDERSTANDING RESILIENCY FACTORS FOR STUDENTS OF COLOR IN TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Please fill out this questionnaire and return it in the enclosed, addressed, stamped, envelope **as soon as possible**. If you wish to receive the $10 monetary reimbursement for sending back the completed questionnaire, please also fill out the document entitled, "Respondent Information for Monetary Reimbursement, Resiliency Factors Questionnaire" (*to receive reimbursement, questionnaire must be received by June 1, 2001*). Additional information about this questionnaire is provided in the attached document, "Information about the Resiliency Factors Questionnaire."

First, help us find out more about you by providing the following demographic information:

1. **Ethnicity:**
   African American _____ Asian American _____
   Latino/Latina American _____ American Indian _____
   Ethnic combination: (please specify in your own words):
   _____
   Foreign (please specify ethnicity and country of origin): _____
   _____; _____

2. **Age**: _____

3. **Year in school**: _____; *OR* **Degree**: _____ and **Year Graduated**: _____

4. **Ranking of Resiliency Factors**: Which of the following were, or have been, the most important resiliency factors with regard to your academic success? *Please rank **only the top five**, with "1" being the most likely factor, and "5" being the least.* (For example, if scholarship money was most important in helping you stay in college, that would be marked "1", if mentoring possibilities were second most important, this would be ranked "2" and so on, through "5.) The resiliency factors continue on to the following page.

Resiliency Factors (*contributing to academic success*)	**Rank**
1. Scholarship/Financial Support (*any scholarships or monetary support that helped you stay in school*)	
2. Mentors (*mentoring provided by college faculty or others*)	
3. Teacher Salary (*knowing a stable job will probably be available upon graduation, with summers off*)	
4. Role Model (*wanting to serve as a role model for students of color, as well as all students*)	
5. Family Support (*emotional support from either family of origin: parents/ siblings, or your own family: life partner/children*)	
6.Teacher Hours (*opportunity to have greater quality time with your children/ family due to teacher's work schedule*)	
7. Friend/Peer Support (*emotional support from friends or college peers*)	
8. Social/Community Support (*support from the larger community, e.g. civic groups, social groups, church groups*)	
9. High School Preparatory Support (*vocational guidance or high school prep courses that have been instrumental to your college success*)	

QUESTIONNAIRE: UNDERSTANDING RESILIENCY FACTORS
FOR STUDENTS OF COLOR IN TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS
(continued)

10. Spiritual support (*support from a Higher Power, through prayer, chanting, meditation, etc. If support was more* ***social*** *in nature, please use no. 8, Social/Community Support, instead.*)	
11. Other Factor (*please provide a description of the factor:* _____ *and rate its importance in the right-hand column).*	
12. Other Factor (*please provide a description of the factor:* _____ *and rate its importance in the right-hand column).*	
13. Other Factor (*please provide a description of the factor:* _____ *and rate its importance in the right-hand column).*	
14. Other Factor (*please provide a description of the factor:* _____ *and rate its importance in the right-hand column).*	

5. Is there any additional information you would like us to know? Please feel free to write additional comments in the space below.

Any questions or concerns about this research, as well as a summary of the results, may be obtained from Dr. Jennifer Holt, or her associates, Les Green, Director, and Betsy Mahowald, Assistant Director, Office of Cultural Diversity, _____ University, [phone, email].

Appendix C

RESPONDENT INFORMATION FOR MONETARY REIMBURSEMENT,

RESILIENCY FACTORS QUESTIONNAIRE

Thank you very much for your prompt reply to our questionnaire. It is much appreciated. To receive a $10 reimbursement check for your effort, please fill in the information below and return it with the questionnaire in the self-addressed, stamped envelope provided. (Additional information concerning the purpose, confidentiality safeguards, and risks of filling out the questionnaire are provided in the attached document, "Information about the Resiliency Factors Questionnaire.")

1. **NAME** (as you would like it to appear on the check. PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY!!)

_____

2. SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER

_____

3. **ADDRESS** (that you would like the check to be sent to. *If you are having it sent to someone other than yourself, please be sure to include that information*, e.g. Attention: Multicultural Teachers Program, and their address.)

_____

Attention (receiver, if different than name given above)

_____

Address

_____

City, State, Zipcode

Once again, thank you so much for responding to the Resiliency Factors Questionnaire. Any questions or concerns about this research may be directed to Dr. Jennifer Holt, through the Office of Cultural Diversity, _____ University, [phone, email].

Author Note

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Tables

Table 1

Ethnic Composition of Study Participants

Ethnic Group	Frequency	Percent
African-American	23	33.8
Asian-American	20	29.4
European-American	1	1.5
Foreign National	2	2.9
Latino/Latina-American	9	13.2
Multiracial	5	7.4
Native American	4	5.9
Unknown	4	5.9
Total	68	100.0

Table 2

Participants' Year in School

Year in School	Frequency	Percent
1st/Freshman	5	7.4
2nd/Sophomore	2	2.9
3rd/Junior	11	16.2
4th/Senior	10	14.7
None indicated	40	58.8
Total	68	100.0

Table 3

Degree of Participant

Degree	Frequency	Percent
BA	11	16.2
BS	7	10.3
BS Teaching	1	1.5
BSC	1	1.5
Communication Studies	1	1.5
Education	1	1.5
Initial License	1	1.5
M.Ed.	5	7.4
MA	2	2.9
Master's Candidate	1	1.5
MS	1	1.5
Ph.D.	1	1.5
Yes	2	2.9
None specified	33	48.5
Total	68	100.0

Table 4

Participants' Year Graduated

Year Graduated	Frequency	Percent
1989	1	1.5
1990	1	1.5
1991	1	1.5
1993	1	1.5
1998	1	1.5
1999	6	8.8
2000	4	5.9
2001	23	33.8
Future graduate	3	4.4
No Value	27	39.7
Total	68	100.0

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Table 5

Differences in the Mean Ranks of Resiliency Factors

Resiliency Factor	R'	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.	14.	15.	16.
1..Scholarship/Financial Support	2.90	0.00															
2..Mentors	6.85	**3.95**	0.00														
3..Teacher Salary	8.08	**5.18**	1.24	0.00													
4..Role Model	5.80	**2.90**	-1.04	-2.28	0.00												
5..Family Support	4.22	1.32	**-2.63**	**-3.86**	-1.58	0.00											
6..Teacher Hours	8.61	**5.71**	1.76	0.53	**2.81**	**4.39**	0.00										
7..Friend/Peer Support	7.27	**4.38**	0.43	-0.81	1.47	**3.05**	-1.34	0.00									
8..Social/Community Support	9.64	6.74	2.79	1.56	**3.84**	**5.42**	1.03	2.37	0.00								
9..High School Preparatory Support	9.50	**6.60**	**2.65**	1.42	**3.70**	**5.28**	0.89	2.23	-0.14	0.00							
10..Spiritual Support	8.75	**5.85**	1.90	0.67	**2.95**	**4.53**	0.14	1.48	-0.89	-0.75	0.00						
11..Institutional Support	10.71	**7.82**	**3.87**	**2.63**	**4.91**	**6.49**	2.10	**3.44**	1.07	1.21	1.96	0.00					
12..Course Availability	10.89	**7.99**	**4.04**	**2.81**	**5.09**	**6.67**	2.28	**3.62**	1.25	1.39	2.14	0.18	0.00				
13..Academic Preparation	10.63	**7.73**	**3.78**	2.54	**4.82**	**6.40**	2.01	**3.35**	0.99	1.13	1.88	-0.09	-0.26	0.00			
14..Internal Motivation	10.48	**7.58**	**3.63**	2.40	**4.68**	6.26	1.87	**3.21**	0.84	0.98	1.73	-0.24	-0.41	-0.15	0.00		
15..Employer Support	10.86	**7.96**	**4.01**	**2.78**	**5.06**	**6.64**	2.25	**3.59**	1.22	1.36	2.11	0.15	-0.03	0.24	0.38	0.00	
16..Transportation	10.90	**8.01**	**4.06**	**2.82**	**5.10**	**6.68**	2.29	**3.63**	1.26	1.40	2.15	0.19	0.01	0.28	0.43	0.04	0.00

Note: R': Mean Rank. Numbers in bold indicate differences greater than 2.57. Mean rank correlation = .42. Kendall's W = .38.

Table 6

Mean Ranks and Sample Characteristics of All Resiliency Factors by Ethnic Group

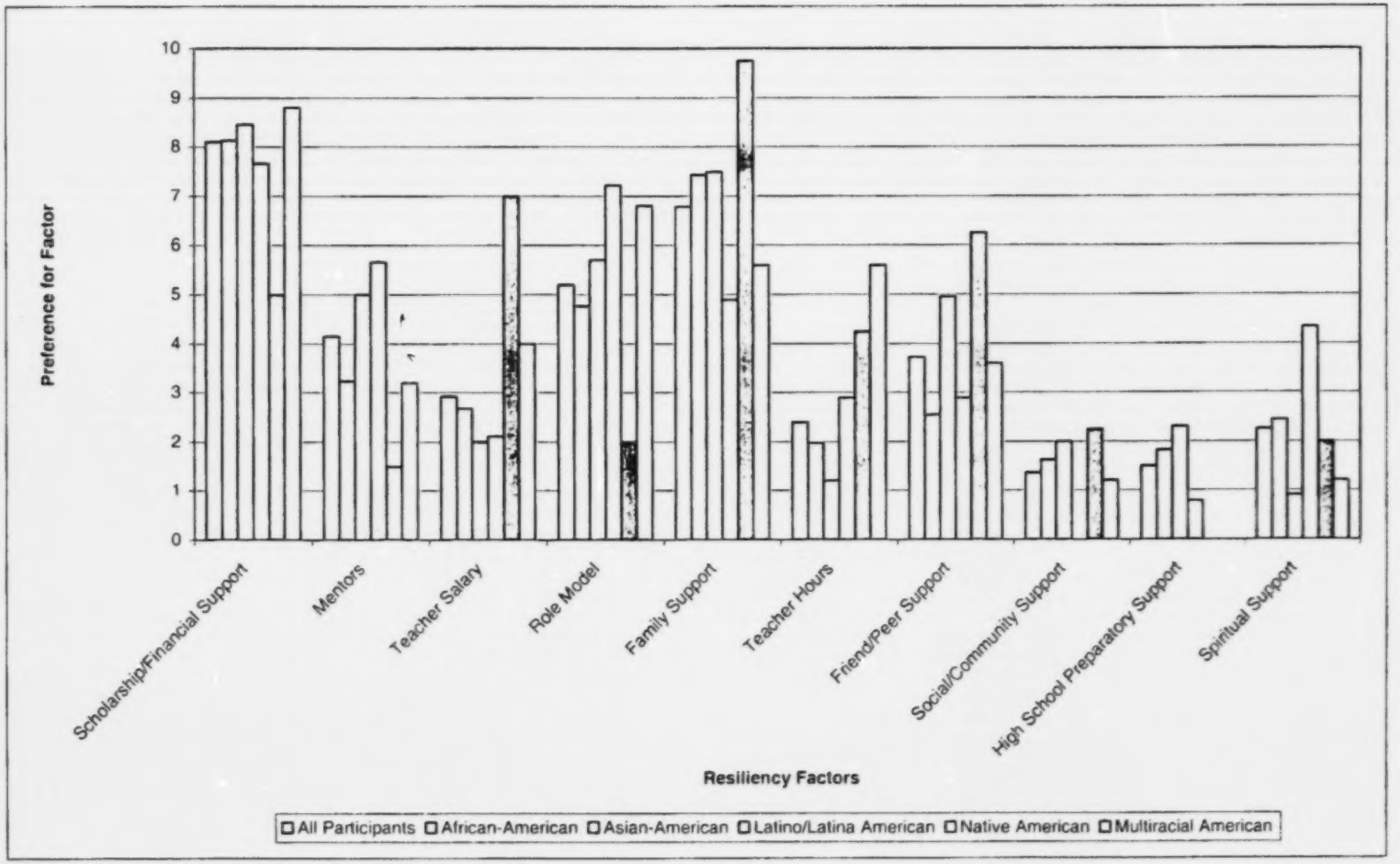
Resiliency Factor	All Participants	African-American	Asian-American	Latino/Latina American	Native American	Multiracial American
1. Scholarship/Financial Support	2.90	2.87	2.55	3.33	6.00	2.20
2. Mentors	6.85	7.76	6.00	5.33	9.50	7.80
3. Teacher Salary	8.08	8.33	9.00	8.89	4.00	7.00
4. Role Model	5.80	6.24	5.30	3.78	9.00	4.20
5. Family Support	4.22	3.57	3.50	6.11	1.25	5.40
6. Teacher Hours	8.61	9.02	9.80	8.11	6.75	5.40
7. Friend/Peer Support	7.27	8.46	6.05	8.11	4.75	7.40
8. Social/Community Support	9.64	9.37	9.00	11.00	8.75	9.80
9. High School Preparatory Support	9.50	9.17	8.70	10.22	11.00	11.00
10. Spiritual Support	8.75	8.57	10.10	6.67	9.00	9.80
11. Institutional Support	10.71	10.59	11.00	11.00	11.00	11.00
12. Course Availability	10.89	10.67	11.00	11.00	11.00	11.00
13. Academic Preparation	10.63	9.89	11.00	11.00	11.00	11.00
14. Internal Motivation	10.48	9.80	11.00	10.11	11.00	11.00
15. Employer Support	10.86	10.98	11.00	11.00	11.00	11.00
16. Transportation	10.90	10.72	11.00	11.00	11.00	11.00
Sample Characteristics						
Sample Size	68	23	20	9	4	5
Kendall's Coefficient of Concordance	0.42	0.39	0.55	0.50	0.62	0.57
Mean Rank Correlation	0.38	0.35	0.52	0.46	0.60	0.54
Correction Factor	2.57	4.41	4.73	7.06	10.58	9.47

Figure Caption

Figure 1

Preference for Resiliency Factors by Ethnic Group

Figure



Note: Bars represent the difference between 11 and mean ranks, eliminating the 6 factors not common to all participants.

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Footnotes

[i] Kendall's Coefficient of Concordance, also known as Kendall's W, is a measure of the variance in rankings. Kendall's W is a measure of how the rankings given by each participant related to one another. If every participant had ranked the items identically, Kendall's W would be one. If every participant had ranked the items differently, Kendall's W would be zero.

[ii] $CorrectionFactor = z\left(1-\alpha/2\left(\frac{r(r-1)}{2}\right)\right)\sqrt{\frac{r(r+1)}{6n}} = 2.57$

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